putting up an Electric Meter Factory, while negotiations are going on with a prominent Firm of American manufacturers to set up a tyre factory in the State. The present state of Rubber Plantation industry is a convincing proof of the need for setting up a plant in the State to consume the rubber produced in the State.

53. The reorganisation and development of the Government-owned Industrial concerns are also engaging the attention of Government. The Travancore Rubber Works which was taken over under Government management last year is working satisfactorily. The question of expanding and reorganising the production of plywood and Ceramics in the State, is being considered. Government have acquired the Associated Mineral Concern at Chavara, with a view to running it along with the Travancore Minerals Concerns under the same management. The Travancore Minerals Concerns which was acquired by Government in 1949 has yielded satisfactory results and it is hoped that the addition of the new concern will substantially enhance our profits. Action is also being taken to reorganise the Shark Liver Oil factory on a commercial basis.

54. *Lemon Grass Breeding.*—The State produces nearly 80 per cent of the world's supply of lemon grass oil. A scheme of research was started this year for genetical experiments to evolve a superior variety of grass which will have a higher citral content. An experimental Lemon Grass breeding centre and Pilot-plant are also contemplated.

Labour

55. The labour situation was satisfactory during the year. There were some strikes and lock-outs in some of the big factories, but with the constitution and regular functioning of the three Industrial Tribunals, labour disputes are being amicably settled. It is also a matter of satisfaction that most of the industrial concerns have agreed to participate in our housing scheme for Industrial labour and to contribute their share to supplement the interest-free loans proposed to be given by Government.

Cottage Industries

56. In my last speech, I had referred to the constitution of the Cottage Industries Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. P. J. Thomas for exploring the possibilities of developing the existing and potential cottage industries in the State. That Committee has conducted a comprehensive survey and the data collected are being consolidated. Meanwhile they have submitted an interim report outlining the more important measures to be undertaken. This report is now under the consideration of Government. The constitution of a Cottage Industries Board, the organisation of a Central Cottage Industries Research Centre and the starting of a Polytechnic are some of the important recommendations of the Committee. We have included a lump sum of Rs. 11 lakhs in the next year's budget for implementing the main proposals of the Committee and we hope to make substantial progress in this direction next year.

Advancement of Backward Communities

57. The amelioration of the condition of Backward Communities is receiving the special attention of the Government. We have been making progressively liberal provision of funds for the Uplift Backward Communities as may be seen from the following figures.

Year	*Amount of payment Rs. in lakhs*
1124 (Actuals)	2·80
1949-50 (7½ months of 1125—actuals)	2·70
1950-51 (Revised Estimate)	9·88
1951-52 (Budget Estimate)	12·61

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